

# A TWIN-IDENTITY.

EDITH STEWART DREWRY IN "BELGRAVIA."

"What am I?" you ask, because I say I have had a twin only 30—a stranger experience than any which you five gentlemen have favored us to beguile the weary time we are snored up in the train; and as it seems it will be quite an hour before we can get on to London I will tell you—if you care to hear the story—why I say so, and what I am only I hope those two ladies will not be shocked to find themselves in my company? No—Thank—well then, I am an agent-de-police, and have just come over from Paris to spend Christmas with some English friends. Even we poor police agents get a little holiday sometimes—hain! And the life has its attractions too, as well as its dangers and repulsions. Personally I had little choice, for I was born in the service, brought up in it, for my father was a very clever officer of the Paris secret police. I married in the force, widowed in it, and being one of the best women detectives I was ever of retaining my position. Nature has favored me, for, as you see, I am a tall but very slight made woman, with a face which lends itself well to masculine disguise. Pardons, madame, what did you say?—Oh! I make a handsome young fellow too—ha, ha! I have often been told so, and that I have a woman's wit and a man's courage. One needs both in my profession, too, I can tell you; and steady nerves, too, as you will see.

Well, about this time five years ago, all Paris was suddenly started into horror by the discovery of one of those singularly brutal crimes which I must confess Francis only occasionally rivaled by the wildest deeds of the Far West.

Some few months previously a wealthy banker, named Folade, had married a very pretty American girl, one of twins, who in all but personal resemblance were so absolutely as one being, and so deeply attached, as to be singular even for twins.

Remember this, that nothing of all this till nearly the termination of my connection with the case. All that the police knew was the bare fact that Madame Folade had a sister who after the former's marriage had returned to Virginia, U. S., and was there when the tragedy took place, the news of it completely prostrating her health for months. Remember that also, please.

M. Folade had a villa in large grounds some way out in Paris, in a lonely place, and that fatal evening the banker, having a violent headache, retired about 10 o'clock, leaving his wife down in the salon reading, with her pet dog, a Scotch terrier, in the room, and that was the last the poor fellow saw of his wife and her faithful would-be defender alive. M. Folade awoke at 2 in the morning, and finding himself still alone, got up, partially dressed, and went downstairs, thinking his wife had dropped asleep over her book. The salon was empty, the window open, and blood was on the floor near the wife's chair!

Monsieur was frantic, called up the household, sent for the nearest police, and every inch of the grounds was searched. As a result Paris soon blazed with the horrible discovery that Madame Folade had been stabbed to the heart (from behind, the doctor said), probably in the room, then the body carried out to a remote corner of the grounds and literally cut up piecemeal, for the head, trunk, hands and limbs were found by degrees in different parts of the grounds—also a long, sharp-pointed knife, blood stained, was found, and the sergeant-de-police himself discovered in a remote spot, under a bush, the body of the poor terrier, all of which, however, so ghastly a stab, but close to its mouth, as if the teeth in the death agony had unclenched and dropped it, was a man's right hand fourth finger with a ring upon it. The faithful animal had evidently flown to the murderer and bitten off that little finger; then, doubtless, mortally wounded itself, fled to the bushes and died before it could reach the house with its prize. Of the assassin there was no trace whatsoever, not even a foot-print, for the ground was as dry under a hard black frost.

Well, the finger was, of course, at once preserved in spirits. A signet ring, it is found had a monogram on the engraving of it, "L. S." On that finger, and ring, and knife, we had to rely primarily to identify the murderer.

Of course, M. Folade himself was questioned as under possible suspicion; but it was soon clear that he was guiltless. The marriage had been one of love. He was a fond and unselfish husband and one worthy of true trust; but that some savage hate and jealousy was the motive of the crime was tolerably clear. Nothing was stolen nor touched. The devilish deliberation and sequence to the manner of leaving a blood-thirsty revenge—for what?—by whom done? A lover scorned, perhaps, but when and where? No trace, no sign of any one to suspect, present or missing, whom she had known; could he be found, although M. Folade made it understood that no expense or time should be bounded, and that the arrest of the murderer would be well rewarded. You know that in France we do not allow any reward, officially or openly offered, as you do here for such things. It is done, of course, but—sub rosa.

The case was in my especial chef's hands, but I was not in it then, for my husband was full, as that week I went off to Vienna on a matter of political crime which took me six months to run my man to earth and have them arrested. I only learned the details of the Folade case from my return—learned of necessity from my chef, M. Dupre.

"Madame Marie Lacroix," said he grimly, "I must have your aid now in this Folade mystery."

"Eh bien! M. le Chef," I answered, "tell me all details and I obey the order."

This he did, therefore, and concluded emphatically.

"Now, although I shall not relax my efforts, it is on you, Marie, that your old chef relies to main-ain his reputation. We want the assassin; the evidence is clear. We have the man who murdered; and the hero who sold the knife to a gentleman who he says he shall know again but cannot describe enough to be of much use—these common people are so stupid, so unobscrvant—hain! Rather tall, rather good looking, about 30 or 40—bah, see there!—that would do for hundreds. Last Christmas, whilst still unmarried Madame Folade (then Miss Grey) was in the Riviera with a lady since dead, but we could find no trace of anyone to whom suspicions would attach. Do you best, Marie, money is not to be spared—a great thing."

I was then well supplied, and withdrew. I will not trouble you with details here, but I threw myself heart and soul into the mysterious case, which had so baffled my confederates. I do not know when I have been so intensely absorbed in a case, so passionately set on success as I was on this. I was so entirely concentrated on that end. This almost abnormal enfolding of my whole being in the interests of those who had loved the ill-fated lady—may perhaps account for the strange energy I set to work my own way. I visited the Villa Folade, saw the place, the picture of Madame Folade there, and the knife, ring and finger in our possession, and all the people connected with the case. Then, but said that at a rather mixed had made the last autumn she had noticed a very pretty American who was rather annoyed by the notice of a blue domino. Following up that slender chance I traced out the Folade case, a work of time—and she recognized the photo, laughed at the freedom of American girls, said this one appeared to be alone and to have come in bravado, but had not frightened at the attentions of persecutions of the blue domino, had heartily resumed her mask, (the Polc adored), and vanished.

Here, then, was surely the root of the

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#### Rate Train Leaves.

#### Pittsburg.....\$9.00 8:00 A. M.

#### East Liberty..... 2.95 9:10 " "

#### Washington.....8.45 P. M.

#### The tickets will be good for use on any regular train of the dates above named except limited express trains. The return coupon will be valid for passage on any regular train within the return limit except the Pennsylvania limited.

#### Best Family Coal.

#### We employ no agents to solicit orders, thereby saving our patrons their commission.

#### Best Panhandle and Youghiogheny bituminous coal, anthracite coal and coke wholesale and retail.

#### Special rates to manufacturers, regular teamsters and haulers. Railroad yards only.

#### LATIMER, MEYERS & CO., Fourth avenue and Try street and Thirtieth street and Liberty avenue. MWVSU

#### Fleishman & Co.

#### Have reduced their

#### \$20 plush sacks to \$10.

#### \$25 plush sacks to \$13.50.

#### \$27.50 plush sacks to \$13.

#### \$30 plush sacks to \$20.

#### \$15 fur capes to \$8.

#### SPECIAL SALE of French dresses still continues this week. These dresses are rapidly being picked up by ladies who know choice bargains. There are yet many desirable ones to select from and they are certainly rare bargains. PARCELS & JONES, 29 Fifth avenue. WF

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